



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

but omnipotence. No trick or concealment is tolerable which holds us from spreading our wings, and no play is ever stale which lures to the loftier flights.

JOHN CORBIN.

WHAT IS SOCIALISM?

A REJOINDER TO SOME CRITICISMS.

THE articles recently appearing in this REVIEW under the general title of "What is Socialism?" brought numerous letters to the Editor and the writer. This correspondence is of significance for at least three reasons.

First, almost without exception, the REVIEW's correspondents were Socialists. Here and there was a letter from the opposing camp, but these were few. From this I draw the conclusion—strongly impressed upon me before but now reinforced—that while the supporters of the revolutionary movement are active in carrying on their campaign its opponents are indifferent to the dangers facing them. This attitude explains the enormous strides Socialism is making. The Socialist is tireless. He is an omnivorous reader. In the reading-rooms it is the Socialist who is devouring the NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW and similar American and foreign publications, earnestly studying what the opponents or supporters of Socialism write, always ready to join the issue, giving circulation by word of mouth to every argument or plea that will advance his cause. Socialist literature and Socialist speakers spread the doctrine, but little if any attempt is made to rebut or to reach the dissatisfied on the border-line willing to listen to reason if properly presented, who join the ranks of the revolutionists because they hear only one side.

Second.—These letters breathe conviction. Whether we believe Socialism is right or wrong, it is evident that to the Socialist his cause is just. He does not question; he knows. It is that profound confidence in the righteousness of the cause he has espoused that makes Socialism the vital—and dangerous—thing it is and constitutes the menace to society. The sincerity of the Socialist is as striking as the indifference of his opponent, whose courage may be no less, but who is content to oppose a resolute advance by wilfully closing his eyes.

Third.—These letters show that Socialism is confined to no one class or profession, that it has wiped out sectionalism and broken down the artificial boundaries of geographers. One is not surprised to receive a letter supporting Socialism from that hotbed of lawlessness Los Angeles, but it is somewhat bewildering that a man writing from Wall Street (who is courageous enough to give his name and his office-building) should avow his belief. New Ulm (Minnesota), Washington, Nashville, Seattle, great centers as well as places having only a local fame, are represented in the correspondence; clergymen, newspaper writers, workingmen, lawyers, and men whose occupations or professions are unclassified, have read these articles and thought proper to expose the fallacies of the author.

I said in one of my articles that the reason Socialism had obtained such a hold was the belief of its votaries, nearly always sincere and very

frequently disinterested, that it would ameliorate social conditions and lead to the suppression of poverty. Thus writes one of my correspondents, whose every word stamps him as a man of deep sincerity who has given earnest thought to pressing social problems: "To be frank, I, like thousands of others, have joined the Socialistic movement, not for its historical mission, but through economic oppression. To-day Socialism is to me what the synagogue was for my father, a hope for a better present and a gateway to heaven." This is the burden of all the letters. The world is to be rejuvenated, reformed, remade through Socialism. It cannot abolish death, but it will drive out everything else of which man now complains.

If I believed this I should be a Socialist. So, I think, would all my friends whose views are similar to my own. But it is because we cannot believe this, it is because our reasoning has convinced us that Socialism instead of improving conditions would bring greater confusion, greater injustice, greater inequality, and set back progress instead of advancing it, that we endeavor to lead men in the proper direction and to point out the dangers we would avert and the evils not to be contemplated without fear.

Socialism I declared to be wrong, fundamentally wrong, and it is wrong because it is an attempt to subvert economic laws and to defy the laws of nature. Several of my correspondents write that Socialism would do away with "wage slavery" and "the exploitation of labor"; that instead of "profits," which they hold to be the cause of low wages and long hours of labor, every person would receive a "labor credit," which would substitute honesty for our present system of legalized robbery. I cannot in the limited space at my command do more than again remind my readers that the Socialist is not so much concerned in abolishing profits as he is in receiving some of those profits himself, which he believes would be paid in the form of higher wages. No fault can be found with this; it is not only perfectly natural but also perfectly proper that every man should desire higher wages, but what the Socialist cannot see, or refuses to admit if he is capable of clear thinking, is that he would not destroy "wage slavery" and he could not bring about equality, and he is always professing to be striving for equality. The so-called "labor credit" would not materially differ from the existing wage system, for every man who now works receives credit for his labor and is paid for it in money, which he may do with as he pleases; under Socialism his "labor credit" would be satisfied either in money or the right to obtain goods manufactured by the community to be charged against his labor credit, or the services of others, who in turn would be given credit for the work performed. The method of recompense and payment would be different, but the practical effect would be the same. As for equality—that is, equality of work or equality of compensation—that is impossible. All men are not born equal, neither do they remain equal. One man is born with a better brain, another with greater strength, another with more will power. One man is either born with ambition or acquires it; his ambition makes him overcome difficulties and he succeeds. Another man is indolent, still another is hard-working but unintelligent. Shall the stupid man who can do nothing except what he is told—and even then does it very badly—receive as

high reward as the directing hand or brain? How long does any one suppose that state of affairs would last? One of my Socialist correspondents, after decrying profits, makes this original suggestion: "Now let us get together on a broad platform and declare that the laborer and worker shall be rewarded by a Board of Industry according to the grade and quality of his services." Is not this very thing being done every day in the year? Are not men now rewarded according to the quality of their services? The Socialist is forced to recognize that inequality of service must result in inequality of compensation.

One may as well talk about the equality of animals or the equality of trees or the equality of substances as the equality of men. Why are not all horses equal—equal in courage or strength or beauty or intelligence; in the same orchard are some apple trees better than others; why does one mine produce coal of the highest quality while that from an adjoining mine is inferior? Let he who can answer these questions, but until he does let him keep silent about the equality of man. Man never has been equal. I do not say that his dream may not be realized some time in the distant future, but in our present stage of development it is an impossibility.

I repeat what I said in my previous articles. The existing social system is not perfect. Many things are permitted to be done that society for its own good ought to prohibit. In every community there is an element that has just cause for complaint. The reward of labor is often unfair, inequitable, insufficient. These things I recognize; these things, I think, every thoughtful man is compelled to admit. What is wrong I believe ultimately will be corrected, for I have profound faith in the development of man and the progress of society, but I do not believe that man will improve or society will make progress if science is abandoned in the pursuit of empiricism.

A. MAURICE LOW.

CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST.

SYRACUSE, NEW YORK, *April 23, 1913.*

DEAR EDITOR,—The usually accurate Sydney Brooks, in his article on "Aspects of the Income Tax," in the April issue of your valuable periodicals, falls into a grave error.

The Civil War amendments were both assented to and participated in by the seceding States. Mr. Seward did not issue his proclamation until twenty-seven of the thirty-six States had ratified. They probably did not act from the heart, but the United States Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of their ratification.

I am, dear sir,

MICHAEL CLUNE.